

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed September 27, 2007 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1, 3-7, and 9-26 are now pending in this application. Claims 1, 3-7, 9-12, and 25 stand rejected. Claims 13-24 have been withdrawn. Claim 26 is newly added.

The rejection of Claim 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is respectfully traversed. Claim 25 has been amended to remove the recitation of a plurality of tabs engaging a top cover of the washing machine “forming an opening.” Accordingly, Claim 25 is submitted as being in compliance with Section 112, second paragraph, and notification to that effect is solicited. For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 112 rejection of Claim 25 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 1, 6-7, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,467,627 to Platt et al. (hereinafter referred to as “Platt”) is respectfully traversed.

Platt describes a washing machine (10) that includes a wash tub (14), a pump (24), and a bleach dispensing chamber (52). A tap line (30) connects pump (24) to bleach dispensing chamber (52). During a regular wash cycle, a solenoid (152) is energized to open a valve member (150) connected to tap line (30). When valve member (150) is opened, a wash fluid is caused to flow into bleach dispensing chamber (52) through tap line (30) and to dispense diluted bleach into wash tub (14). Notably, Platt does not describe or suggest a controller configured to automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense a diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles.

Claim 1 recites an additive dispensing system for a washing machine, the washing machine including a tub for holding wash liquid and a basket for holding articles to be washed, and defining an annular space between the tub and the basket, the additive dispensing system including “a top cover; a reservoir removably coupled to said top cover, and configured to contain an additive; a water valve coupled to said reservoir; a conduit coupled to said reservoir and extending into the annular space, said conduit providing fluid communication between said reservoir and the annular space, and configured to deliver a

diluted additive into the annular space; and a controller coupled to said water valve, said controller configured to: control said water valve to introduce water into said reservoir to dilute the additive; automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense the diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles; and dispense the diluted additive to the washing machine at the adjusted dispense time by delivering the diluted additive into the annular space through said conduit.”

Platt does not describe or suggest an additive dispensing system for a washing machine as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, Platt does not describe or suggest an additive dispensing system that includes a controller configured to automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense a diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Platt merely describes a washing machine that energizes a solenoid during a regular wash cycle to dispense diluted bleach from a bleach dispensing chamber into a wash tub.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is submitted as being patentable over Platt.

Claim 6 depends from Claim 1. When the recitations of Claim 6 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 6 is likewise patentable over Platt.

Claim 7 recites a washing machine including “a tub for holding wash liquid; a basket for holding articles to be washed, an annular space defined between said tub and said basket; and an additive dispensing system comprising: a top cover; a reservoir removably coupled to said top cover, and configured to contain an additive; a water valve coupled to said reservoir; a conduit coupled to said reservoir and extending into said annular space, said conduit providing fluid communication between said reservoir and said annular space, and configured to deliver a diluted additive into said annular space; and a controller coupled to said water valve, said controller configured to: control said water valve to introduce water into said reservoir to dilute the additive; automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense the diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles; and dispense the diluted additive to the washing machine at the adjusted dispense time by delivering the diluted additive into said annular space through said conduit.”

Platt does not describe or suggest a washing machine as recited in Claim 7. More specifically, Platt does not describe or suggest a washing machine that includes a controller configured to automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense a diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Platt merely describes a washing machine that energizes a solenoid during a regular wash cycle to dispense diluted bleach from a bleach dispensing chamber into a wash tub.

Accordingly, Claim 7 is submitted as being patentable over Platt.

Claim 12 depends from Claim 7. When the recitations of Claim 12 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 7, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 12 is likewise patentable over Platt.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 1, 6-7, and 12 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claim 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Korean Publication No. 2003055965 to Je (hereinafter referred to as “Je”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,160,367 to Vona, Jr. et al. (hereinafter referred to as “Vona, Jr.”) is respectfully traversed.

The electronic translation of Je describes a bleach input apparatus for a washing machine. The input apparatus includes a storage unit (40) with a bleaching agent chamber (41) and a softening agent chamber (42). A partition (46) separates the chambers (41 and 42), and a siphon pipe (43 and 43') extends from an interior of each chamber (40 and 41), respectively, to a pass station (65) of a tub cover (60). Notably, Je does not describe or suggest a controller configured to automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense a diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles.

Vona, Jr. describes a washing machine (10) that includes a tub (28), a central panel (14), and a dispenser apparatus (60) for dispensing fluid from dispenser apparatus (60) into tub (28). A timer control knob (157) allows a user to set a desired dispensing time. After clothing is placed into tub (28), a washing cycle is initiated by the user through central panel (14), and a desired dispensing time is set by the user using the timer control knob (157), such that a solenoid (150) is actuated at the desired time in the wash cycle to allow bleach to flow

into tub (28). Notably, Vona, Jr. does not describe or suggest a controller configured to automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense a diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles. Rather, Vona, Jr. describes a washing machine that requires a user to determine the dispensing time.

Claim 25 recites an additive dispensing system for a washing machine, the washing machine including a tub for holding wash liquid and a basket for holding articles to be washed, and defining an annular space between the tub and the basket, the additive dispensing system including “a reservoir cover comprising a plurality of tabs extending from said reservoir cover, said plurality of tabs engaging a top cover of the washing machine a reservoir removably coupled to said reservoir cover, and configured to contain an additive; a water valve coupled to said reservoir; and a controller coupled to said water valve, said controller configured to: control said water valve to introduce water into said reservoir to dilute the additive; automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense the diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles; and dispense the diluted additive to the washing machine at the adjusted dispense time by delivering the diluted additive into the annular space.”

None of Je and Vona, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests an additive dispensing system for a washing machine as recited in Claim 25. More specifically, none of Je and Vona, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests an additive dispensing system that includes a controller configured to automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense a diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Je merely describes an input apparatus that includes a storage unit with a bleaching agent chamber, a softening agent chamber, and a siphon pipe that extends from an interior of each chamber to a pass station of a tub cover, and Vona, Jr. describes a washing machine that requires a user to determine an additive dispensing time.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 25 is submitted as being patentable over the combination of Je and Vona, Jr.

The rejection of Claims 1, 3-7, and 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Je in view of Vona, Jr. and U.S. Patent No. 3,118,297 to Olding (hereinafter referred to as “Olding”) is respectfully traversed.

Je and Vona, Jr. are described above. Olding describes an automatic washer that includes a cabinet (20), an outer splash tub (34), an extractor wash tub (32), and a bleaching agent conduit (82). The bleaching agent conduit (82) introduces a bleaching agent into wash tub (32) such that the bleaching agent is sufficiently diluted before coming into contact with clothes within wash tub (32). Notably, Olding does not describe or suggest a controller configured to automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense a diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles.

Claim 1 is recited above.

None of Je, Vona, Jr., and Olding, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests an additive dispensing system for a washing machine as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, none of Je, Vona, Jr., and Olding, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests an additive dispensing system that includes a controller configured to automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense a diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Je merely describes an input apparatus that includes a storage unit with a bleaching agent chamber, a softening agent chamber, and a siphon pipe that extends from an interior of each chamber to a pass station of a tub cover, Vona, Jr. describes a washing machine that requires a user to determine an additive dispensing time, and Olding merely describes an automatic washer that includes a bleaching agent conduit for introducing a bleaching agent into a wash tub such that the bleaching agent is sufficiently diluted before coming into contact with clothes within the wash tub.

Accordingly, Claim 1 is submitted as being patentable over Je in view of Vona, Jr. and Olding.

Claims 3-6 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 3-6 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 3-6 likewise are patentable over the combination of Je, Vona, Jr., and Olding.

Claim 7 is recited above.

None of Je, Vona, Jr., and Olding, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a washing machine as recited in Claim 7. More specifically, none of Je, Vona, Jr., and Olding, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a washing machine

that includes a controller configured to automatically adjust a dispense time to dispense a diluted additive corresponding to a selected wash cycle of a plurality of wash cycles. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Je merely describes an input apparatus that includes a storage unit with a bleaching agent chamber, a softening agent chamber, and a siphon pipe that extends from an interior of each chamber to a pass station of a tub cover, Vona, Jr. describes a washing machine that requires a user to determine an additive dispensing time, and Olding merely describes an automatic washer that includes a bleaching agent conduit for introducing a bleaching agent into a wash tub such that the bleaching agent is sufficiently diluted before coming into contact with clothes within the wash tub.


Accordingly, Claim 7 is submitted as being patentable over Je in view of Vona, Jr. and Olding.

Claims 9-12 depend from independent Claim 7. When the recitations of Claims 9-12 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 7, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 9-12 likewise are patentable over the combination of Je, Vona, Jr., and Olding.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 1, 3-7, and 9-12 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, all of the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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